
THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE'S
S E R M O N
B E F O R E
THE HOUSE OF LORDS,
ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1790.

Being the Anniverfary of KING CHARLES's MARTYRDOM.

Die Martis, 2^o Februarii, 1790.

ORDERED, by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, That the Thanks of this House be, and are hereby, given to the Lord Bishop of Carlisle, for the Sermon by him preached before this House, on Saturday last, in the Abbey Church, Westminster; and he is hereby desired to cause the same to be forthwith printed and published.

GEORGE ROSE,
Cler. Parliamentor.

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S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL,

IN THE

ABBAY CHURCH OF WESTMINSTER,

ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1790.

BEING

THE ANNIVERSARY OF KING CHARLES'S MARTYRDOM.

Douglas R.
BY JOHN, LORD BISHOP
OF CARLISLE.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

M.DCC.XC.

S. D. R. M. O. N.

RESEARCHED BEFORE THE

LORDS-SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

ABBEY CHURCH OF WESTMINSTER

ON SATURDAY

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

BY THOMAS LORD BISHOP

OF SALISBURY

PRINTED BY T. CROFT IN THE STRAND

MDCCLX

S E R M O N, &c.

I CHRONICLES, chap. xxix. Part of the 11th verse.

—ALL THAT IS IN THE HEAVENS, AND IN THE EARTH,
IS THINE: THINE IS THE KINGDOM, O LORD!

WE cannot turn our thoughts to contemplate the infinite perfections of God, without being led to apprehend the grounds of a particular providence: a providence, extending its care over all events, both in the material, and in the moral world; and directing and adapting them, in particular cases, by an immediate agency, to the adorable purposes which Omnipotent wisdom sees fit to be executed, for the protection, or punishment, of free and accountable Creatures.

IMPRESSED with a devout sense of this truth, on which a firm foundation is laid for all the acts and services of religion, we are now assembled, to humble ourselves before that great Being, *who ruleth in the kingdom of men*. As a forcible inducement to deter us from the *crying sins* that brought upon our forefathers the displeasure and judgments of Heaven, this day hath been set apart, by public authority, to give us an annual opportunity of meditating, with sorrow and contrition, on that mournful period, in the history of this country, when, by being *divided against itself*, it was brought nearly to *desolation*; when, after suffering, for some years, all the horrors of intestine war, the unnatural contest ended in the subversion of the whole frame of government in church and state; and when, to seal the abolition of monarchy, the Monarch himself, whose death the service of the day calls upon us, more particularly, to deplore, was, with all the aggravating circumstances of cruel insult, by the sentence of a mock tribunal, brought forth to public execution.

THIS unhappy Prince, bred up with too high notions of sovereignty, had, in the earlier years of his reign, assumed powers inconsistent with a limited government. Similar acts of prerogative, under the plea of state necessity, had, undoubtedly, been exercised by some of his immediate predecessors. But, when he ascended the throne, the times of despotism were at an end. Learning had begun to unfold right sentiments about the duty of rulers, and the grounds of allegiance; and wealth, diffused throughout the kingdom, by

growing

growing commerce, had enabled its people to contend manfully for that freedom which their enlightened minds instructed them they had a right to enjoy.

BUT the King, at last, saw his error, in adopting such unconstitutional measures. He had given his sanction to several laws, which, besides guarding against the repetition of past grievances, added many new, and valuable securities to public liberty; the want of which had, hitherto, exposed it to the inroads of regal tyranny.

So many, indeed, and so important were the securities now obtained, that, to use the King's own words, *there is a judgment from Heaven, if these distractions continue* *. Unhappily, they did continue. The dæmon of discontent and discord had scattered his firebrands throughout the land. Every fresh concession, only provoked fresh demands. Having gained more than they could, at first, reasonably expect, the ruling party in Parliament were encouraged to believe, that nothing, however exorbitant, if persisted in, would be refused. And, on the refusal, a civil war, with all its train of desolating calamities, took place.

THE dreadful consequences of prolonging hostilities, and of rejecting the fairest terms of accommodation, repeatedly offered, were not attended to, till it was too late to remedy them.

* See his Answer to the Declaration of Parliament, presented at Newmarket; Clarendon's History, vol. i. p. 351. folio edition.

No sooner had the Parliament gained a decided superiority in the war, than they sunk into insignificance. Their mercenaries, spurning their authority, became their masters; and, equally hostile to the old constitution, for which the King, at the head of his nobility and gentry, had unsuccessfully fought, and to the plan of parliamentary alterations, which would have still left some share of power to the Crown; their fanatical zeal, instigated and directed by unprincipled ambition, under the mask of sanctity, imagined and perpetrated the *foul act* of this day.

THE prayers, in which we have joined, stigmatise it as a *murder*: and the most unequivocal facts justify the harshness of the appellation. Bands of armed men were employed, to exclude, from their place of assembly, the majority of the representative members of Parliament, who had just declared their acceptance of the *King's concessions, as a foundation for proceeding upon, in the settlement of the kingdom*; and the ordinance, for bringing him to a trial, passed by the inconsiderable remnant of that House *, who ignominiously submitted to obey the orders of their revolted army, when sent up to the House of Peers, instead of receiving their sanction, was rejected by them with unanimity, and almost without deliberation †.

* None were permitted to enter the House, but the most furious, and most determined of the Independents; and these exceeded not the number of fifty or sixty. Forty-one members were excluded the first day, and above one hundred and sixty afterwards. See Hume's History, vol. vii. p. 140. quarto.

† See Journal of the House of Lords, of January 2d, 1648-9.—As a foundation for this ordinance, the Commons had passed a vote, declaring the King guilty of high treason, *for levying war against the Parliament and Kingdom*. This vote was, at the same time, *cast out* by the Lords; *nem. contrad.*

IN truth; the cause of the King had now become the cause of the Parliament; it had become the cause of the people; it had become the cause of the constitution. The sense of the nation, or rather of both nations, was significantly expressed. The *Scots*, who, animated by zeal for their Covenant, and encouraged by the intrigues of a foreign power *, had first appeared in arms; and, led on by the delusive hope of extending their beloved plan of church government throughout the island, had, at a subsequent period †, lent their effectual assistance against the royal cause; when they saw their Sovereign a captive (though his captivity had been their own act), were roused to loyalty by his distress, and waged an unsuccessful war to deliver him. The party in England, agreeing with them in religious persuasion, whose dreams of establishing the spiritual tyranny of a General Assembly, independent of the state, had now vanished into air, became converts, equally zealous. And their ministers, who, from their pulpits, and from the press,

* For proofs of this, see D'Estrades's Letters, vol. i. p. 8, 9, 10, 11. 59, 60. On the 2d of December 1637, Richelieu writes thus to D'Estrades: " Je profiterai de l'avis que vous me donnez pour l'Ecosse, & ferai partir l'Abbé " Chambre, mon aumonier, qui est Ecossois de nation, pour aller à Edinbourg : " —L'année ne se passera pas, que le Roi & la Reine d'Angleterre, ne se " repentent d'avoir refusé les offres que vous leur avez faites de la part du " Roi." The Covenant was signed soon after. Richelieu's emissary, had, it seems, successfully executed his commission; for, in 1641, D'Estrades, on his return from Italy, mentions in a letter to the Cardinal, from the Hague, that he had been informed by the Prince of Orange, " Que votre Eminence " avoit envoyé un Abbé Ecossois, à Edinbourg, qui étoit habile homme, et " qui avoit entièrement ruiné le parti du Roi d'Angleterre en Ecosse."—Charles had drawn upon himself the resentment of the Cardinal, by telling D'Estrades, that he would powerfully assist the Spaniards, if France should attack the maritime towns of Flanders.

† In 1644.

had, at first, been so active in raising the storm, by exciting their numerous adherents to the tumults, which overawed the deliberations of Parliament, and drove the King from his capital, exerted their unavailing endeavours, their prayers, and their petitions *, to save his life. And the only plea of *the violent and blood-thirsty men*, by whom he was brought to the scaffold, may be urged by a gang of ruffians, who are tempted to add death to robbery, that they may secure their plunder; and *kill the heir, that they may seize his inheritance.*

THE beginning of strife, says the wise man, *is as when one letteth out water*; and the inference he draws, is, that we should *leave off contention, before it be meddled with.* The transactions of those sad times, furnish a memorable confirmation of the sagacity of the remark, and of the counsel. They who *began the strife*, could not confine the waters they had once set in motion, within the bounds which they wished to prescribe for their course: and they imprudently did not *leave off contention*, till they saw it *meddled with*, and carried to a frightful extreme, by a common enemy of both parties.

SHORT was the duration of quiet servitude, under the iron rod of the military usurper, who had, thus, by a violence equalled only by his abilities, converted the contest between the King and Parliament, into the means of building his own tyranny on the ruins of both. With his death, confusions and changes began again; and the miserable country found every

* See Collier's Ecclesiastical History of England.

change for the worse. In the midst of these distractions, God, *who, in his wrath, thinketh of mercy*, and whose severe judgments had been inflicted to correct, but not to destroy, was pleased, by a deliverance, the circumstances of which bore the most discriminating marks of an over-ruling interposition, to build up again the ruined fabric of the English Constitution; the surviving leaders of that very party, who, at the beginning of the troubles, had been most strenuous in opposing the father, cheerfully co-operating, or rather taking the lead in restoring the son *. Sufficiently instructed, indeed, they must now have been, *how necessary a king's power is to a people's liberty; and that their victories over their prince, had been but triumphs over themselves* †.

It has been remarked by philosophers, that hurricanes, and other convulsions of nature, while they spread present evils, lay the foundation of future good; purifying the air; fertilizing the soil; and introducing a succession of quiet seasons. May not we be allowed to remark, that our political convulsion has produced a similar beneficial effect? Indeed, the lively remembrance of it (a remembrance annually renewed by this day's solemn service) must operate powerfully to endear to the people of this country their ancient form of government; in exchange for which, their ancestors saw themselves cursed with all the evils of anarchy; experiencing, as the Israelites had done, that, *when there was no king, every one did what was right in his own eyes*.

* See *Clarendon State Papers*, vol. iii. *passim*.

† The King's own words: See his Letter to the Prince of Wales, *Clarendon State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 447.

OUR history, at a later time of danger, furnishes a remarkable proof, that the melancholy lesson had made a due impression. When, towards the close of the century, the nation was brought to the brink of a precipice; and, justified by the great law of self-preservation, withdrew its allegiance from a sovereign, who had acted the part of a destroyer; the wise patriots, by whom the new settlement was conducted, did not carry their views beyond the exigency of the case. There appeared to be no wish or desire, to repeat an experiment that had so fatally failed; and, instead of tearing up the foundations of limited monarchy, the more salutary measure was pursued, of introducing important limitations, to correct its remaining defects.

THE excellence of our government, as fixed at that ever-memorable æra of the Revolution, and which (during a period of one hundred years, now fully completed) hath been continued to us, by the signal protection of Heaven, must strike every one, who observes the influence it has had, in securing, and gradually promoting, the national felicity.

To the lively sense of entire safety from any arbitrary act of power, that every British subject, from his earliest years, feels forcibly impressed upon his mind, we may trace that activity of industry, that ardent spirit of enterprise, that inventive and persevering progress towards improvement in agriculture, and in every branch of the arts, of manufacture and commerce, which, while it amply rewards deserving individuals, by enabling them to rise, beyond the humbler classes in which they

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were

were born, to a share of political consequence amongst their countrymen, proportioned to the property they may acquire, hath, at the same time, been the source of that pre-eminence to the state; of that strength, of those resources, of that general prosperity, which are the envied lot of our much favoured island.

It must afford singular satisfaction to reflect, that this prosperity (unimpaired, nay, perhaps, consolidated by the separation of our infatuated colonies) is not liable to be disturbed by any causes of discontent, similar to those that gave birth to the confusions, of which this day reminds us.

THE sphere of royal prerogative is now so accurately ascertained, and so prudently circumscribed; and the mutual control, and separate rights of each of the three branches of the legislature, so perfectly understood; that violent collisions, and hostile competitions between them, seem effectually precluded.

THE people at large, blessed with substantial liberty, under a constitution, in which the three forms, of monarchical, aristocratic, and democratical, government, have been so happily blended and balanced, as to correct the imperfections, and to preserve the advantages peculiar to each, will not, we trust, hastily encourage the fanciful plans of speculative reformers; nor be apt to forget, *That change is not made, without inconvenience, from worse to better**; and that the most plausible

* *Hooker's words.*

changes, when tried, may, too late, be found (as in the last century *) to have been from better to worse.

POLITICAL zeal is, generally, less likely, than that which has religion for its object, to inflame the whole mass of a community. Here, again, there seems to be little apprehension of mischief. The fanatical spirit of the independent levellers, who, impiously, deluded themselves into a persuasion, that they were commissioned by Heaven, to establish, with the sword, the reign of the saints upon earth, doth not disgrace any of the various denominations of our modern separatists. And, while they are made easy by the free exercise of their respective modes of worship, may we not reasonably expect, whatever farther claims are sometimes urged by individuals, that the body of Protestant Dissenters, in general, are well inclined to return due obedience for protection?

THERE have been times, and not very remote, when danger, to our happy establishment, might be suspected, from Dissenters of a different description. But, we have lived to see an end put to the hopes, nay, we may say, to the existence of a popish pretender to the Crown: and, in consequence of this additional ground of security, we can observe the eager desire of those of the Romish communion, to be considered and treated as good subjects.

* The self-denying ordinance (the place-bill of that age) is, here, particularly alluded to. By removing the Earls of Essex, Manchester, Denbigh, Warwick, Sir William Waller, Brereton, Massey, and many other members of both Houses, from their military commands, it had the fatal consequence of putting the power of the sword into the hands of those adventurers who soon used it to overturn the constitution.

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LET us not, however, with all the promising appearances, just enumerated, boast, as David did in his prosperity, *that we shall never be moved.* While *not a sparrow, that falls to the ground, is forgotten before God,* the important events, on which the peace and prosperity, or the distress and destruction of nations depend, are, more particularly, the object of his providential inspection and control. Let us not deceive ourselves. If we abuse the felicities, which so peculiarly distinguish this country, and provoke the anger of the divine Donor, by our ingratitude and vices, the firmest securities may fail. By the invisible, but effective touches of God's avenging arm, a spark may dart forth from the safest quarter, and kindle into a devouring flame. *A little cloud, like a man's hand,* may arise, and change the boasted serenity of our hemisphere into the blackest tempest. Famine may succeed to our plenty; and pestilence to our health. The torch of foreign war, or of domestic discord, may be lighted up. Thus, by the judgments of offended Heaven, while we are vainly flattering ourselves, *that we have much goods, laid up for many years,* we may be reduced as low, as we are now flourishing; and, if *the measure of our iniquities be full,* may be added to the long list of nations, who, *when their cry had waxed great before the Lord,* have been swept off the face of the earth, by *the destroying angel.*

A CONSIDERATION thus awful, surely, merits our most serious attention; and the stated return of this day of humiliation, will not (as too many seem to think) be without its use; as the religious observance of it, will naturally lead us to
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search and try our ways; that, if we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we may be awakened from the lethargy of sin, before we have wearied out the merciful forbearance of Heaven.

HE must be a very negligent, or a very partial, observer of what passes around him, who doth not perceive and lament the strange inconsistency between the belief and the practice of many, who, though they would shudder to be thought apostates from the Gospel, vie with *the fool himself, who says in his heart, there is no God*, in every instance of careless, if not of profligate, conduct. It may, however, afford some consolation, to reflect, that this depravity, though too notorious to be denied, has not, as yet, if some very favourable symptoms do not deceive us, become too general, nor too habitual, to be remedied.

MAY not the ardent gleam of affectionate joy, that burst forth from every breast, on the restoration of our beloved Sovereign's health, be considered as an earnest, that his virtues and piety could not have so sensibly impressed the hearts of his people, if they had not felt the desire of profiting by his example?

MAY not the late seasonable call from the Throne, upon those, who fill the subordinate departments of authority, prove of service, in suppressing indecencies and irregularities, equally destructive of public order and of private virtue?

FROM the commendable exertions of a numerous body of individuals, who have stepped forward, on this occasion, to lend their aid and counsels, towards carrying his Majesty's pious intentions into full execution, have we not cause to rejoice, that the interests of religion and morality are still dear to many, whose elevated stations, example, and influence, peculiarly qualify them to be successful instruments of Providence, in recalling their fellow-subjects from the *broad way* of vice, *that leadeth to destruction*?

AND, may we not add, that the most flattering prospect of introducing an important reformation, has been opened, by the active solicitude expressed, in every part of the kingdom, to found, and to support, institutions for the education of the children of the more indigent and numerous class of the community? Institutions, too intimately connected with the public welfare, to be left to the casual contributions of private benevolence; and highly worthy of the most effectual interference of the legislature, to give them a permanent establishment, and due extent. Under such protection, insured of full success, they would, by a certain, and not a slow, operation, strike at the root of that ignorant and brutal ferocity, which daily prompts so many unhappy wretches, the pests of society, to acts of horrid outrage, reproachful to good government, and disgraceful to humanity itself.

BUT, with all these progressive steps towards national amendment, we must still remember, that the very blessings, which

God has so liberally bestowed upon us ; our peace, our plenty, our high civilization, our extended commerce, our overflowing wealth, and their long train of agreeable accommodations, and pleasurable enjoyments, have a direct and powerful influence, to betray us into *that friendship with the world that is enmity to God*. We are placed by them, as it were, in a terrestrial paradise, where many a serpent lies concealed, ready to *beguile* us from our innocence.

THEY who suffer themselves to be intoxicated with the luxuries of prosperity, are in perpetual danger of falling. Eagerly laying hold of pleasure as often as it presents itself, and never abstaining from scenes of vanity, and circles of mirth, but when the opportunities of joining ⁱⁿ them are denied ; in so unguarded a state, to which, the prevailing manners, and multiplied amusements of this great metropolis, peculiarly expose almost every class of its inhabitants ; whatever passion predominates, will be apt to hurry them to excess ; whatever temptation assaults, will find them ready to yield. The care of their salvation, the hopes of heaven, the terrors of hell, the supreme good, or the ineffable misery of man, in the future and eternal world, being never permitted to divert them from the pursuit of present gratification ; what can be expected, amidst so deplorable a forgetfulness of *the things that belong to their peace*, but to see them make a regular progress, from the idle levities of mere dissipation to all the enormities of presumptuous sin ?

WOULD we, therefore, guard ourselves against the insinuating poison of prosperity, let us, as an antidote, *learn to busy ourselves, by retiring within ourselves**, from that intercourse with a vain world, which, when too closely cultivated, will, inevitably, inflame our passions, and fascinate our understandings; infect us with vicious corruption; and banish from our minds every impression of religion.

BESIDES *entering into our chambers, and communing with our own hearts*, we must accustom ourselves to hold devout intercourse with God: A remedy of the most sovereign efficacy *to keep us unspotted from the world*. By continuing instant in prayer, the veil that separates heaven from earth, will, as it were, be drawn aside; and, the glorious prospect being thus opened and familiarised to our minds, the strongest allurements of pleasure will tempt us in vain; every object of avarice and ambition, will sink in our estimation; and our hopes, our wishes, and our desires, will be full of immortality.

WITHOUT neglecting the necessary duties of our respective stations; nay, even, without abridging our unnecessary recreations, a due portion of time is still in reserve, *for acquainting ourselves with God*, in holy exercises; which, besides their natural tendency to give a due force to the important truths of religion, will make us fit objects of those divine assistances

* King Charles thus expresses himself, in the *Letter to the Prince of Wales*, already referred to.

to strengthen the powers of the soul, promised by *the lips of truth*, to those who pray for them with humility.

AND yet, alas! how few of us can lay our hands upon our hearts, and say, that we have not strangely neglected to cultivate this most effectual means of grace! We must take shame to ourselves; and confess, that, while *the cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life*, have engrossed the whole of our attention; day after day, nay, year after year, has been lost to our spiritual concerns; and scarcely a moment spared for lifting up our hearts unto God.

ARE we sufficiently aware of the mischievous tendency of this neglect? No community can long subsist, much less prosper, if once a general disregard of virtue has tainted its members. There can be no solid and permanent obligation to virtue, but what is derived from religious principle. And, tempted as we are by our depraved appetites, religious principle can preserve its due force upon the minds of those only, who are careful *to give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; and worship him in the beauty of holiness.*

UNLESS, therefore, we have so *hardened our hearts*, as to despise every consideration that can animate the hopes, or alarm the fears, of good citizens and good christians; Let the learned, by their arguments; the wise, by their counsels; *the ministers of God's word*, by taking heed to their doctrine; and, above all, those who are placed in the high rank of nobility,

bility, by their powerful example, endeavour to engage the great body of the people, *not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of too many is*; and to a religious observance of the Lord's day, and a punctual attendance on public worship, to add the daily offices of private devotion.

ON the success of such united exertions, all hopes of effectuating a general reformation, solely depend. Thus, and thus only, can be preserved (must we not, rather, say, can be revived?) that *righteousness which always exalteth a nation*, and the want of which, as *it is the reproach*, so will it, sooner or later, either by the general operation of natural causes, or by the particular and immediate interposition of offended Omnipotence, bring the most flourishing empire to destruction.

To conclude. *If we do not forget the arm that delivered us, and the goodness that hath made us great*, we may, with humble confidence, rely on a continuance of the protection of the moral Governor of the world, *whose eyes are over the righteous, and his ears open unto their prayers*. We may be encouraged to hope, "That he will direct and prosper all the consultations of *this*, and of the other House of Parliament, to the safety, honour, and welfare of our Sovereign, and his kingdoms; that all things may be

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“ so settled by their endeavours, on the best and surest
 “ foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice,
 “ religion and piety, may be established among us for all
 “ generations.”

F I N I S.

